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THE
BULGARIAN FAITH MISSION.

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Life previous to her engaging in this Work.*

BY MRS. ASA MAHAN.

II.—Report for Two Years, from July, 1877, to July, 1879.

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THE BULGARIAN FAITH MISSION.

I.—A BRIEF NARRATIVE OF THE LEADING FACTS OF
MRS. MUMFORD'S LIFE PREVIOUS TO HER ENGAGING
IN THIS WORK.

BY MRS. ASA MAHAN.

MRS. ANNA V. MUMFORD, the subject of this brief sketch, was a daughter of an English gentleman, who was a descendant of the Earl of Dartmouth. Having lost his fortune by the bankruptcy of other individuals, he emigrated to the United States of America. Little Anna was born near Rochester, New York. When she was seven years of age her mother died. Her father being in indigent circumstances, she was adopted by a Christian gentleman and lady, of the name of Crampton, as their own child, they giving her a good New England Christian education. At the age of thirteen she was brought into the kingdom of God. Although of a very retiring turn of mind, such was her conscientiousness and devotion to duty, as well as to study, that she early gave great promise of usefulness. Her adopted parents soon after her conversion removed to the State of Michigan, where she remained until she was of a sufficient age to engage in teaching. She then visited her father, who had removed to the State of Pennsylvania. Here she engaged in teaching until her marriage with Col. Mumford in the year 1858.

Three years subsequent to this, the war of the rebellion broke out, and Col. Mumford was severely wounded at Bull Run, and was taken to the hospital at Alexandria, Va. Here his devoted wife took her first lessons in caring for the sick and wounded, in her loving care of him during many long wearisome days and nights of pain and weakness. As he convalesced, this devoted woman was enabled, as she could be spared from the bedside of her husband, to minister to the wants of the suffering wounded ones all around her, until she was regarded by them as an angel of mercy and

blessing. As soon as Col. Mumford was strong enough to be removed from the hospital, Mrs. M—— took him home, where he remained a few months, until he was sufficiently restored to return to his post of duty in the army.

In the year 1864 a little son was born to them. Some two months afterwards, Col. Mumford was killed by a sharpshooter at Petersburg, Va. He was taken home to Pennsylvania, to be interred, and just as all that was mortal of Col. Mumford reached home, his little son expired in the arms of his mother. My pen cannot depict the scene which followed. She was bereft of husband and only child at one stroke. But for the support of her loving Saviour she would have passed away with them; indeed, for a long time she greatly desired to do so, that she might escape her great sorrow. This the Lord did not permit, but was preparing her for future service in his vineyard.

After a lapse of some two years or more, in which she engaged in special studies, she came to Adrian, Michigan, to visit Mrs. Crampton, the lady who had adopted her, Mr. Crampton having died. Here our acquaintance with her began. Subsequently, the Ladies' Hall, where she boarded, was burnt, and we invited her to our home, where she remained for some months, and became to us as a loving daughter. Although she had for many years been a Christian, yet her afflictions did not seem to have been sanctified to her good. She felt that God was calling her to work in his vineyard, but still cherished the thought that He had dealt hardly with her in her great bereavement. This sentiment seemed to constitute an almost insuperable barrier to further progress in the divine life, especially for entrance into the full liberty of the sons of God, upon which her thoughts were constantly dwelling. Finally, she set her whole being upon knowing her spiritual state as it was, upon understanding what was the will of God in respect to her, and upon attaining a full fruition of what God had in reserve for her. The struggle was a short one. Her will she completely surrendered to the will of her God, and under the baptism of the Holy Ghost she received even more than she had ever asked or thought. A greater transformation in character we never witnessed. In respect to past afflictive providences, there was the most sweet and perfect acquiescence. Her joy was full. One inquiry alone occupied her whole heart, namely, What can I do for the kingdom and glory of Christ?

To complete her preparation for any sphere of usefulness to which she might be called, she entered Oberlin College,

where she graduated in 1871. While there she received a still greater baptism of the Spirit. "Her light so shined" before the pupils and the community that she was strongly recommended to the American Board of Foreign Missions as a missionary. She was accordingly accepted, and sent to Bulgaria, where she laboured with great success for five years. In one revival in her school at Samakov, for example, every one of her pupils was brought to the Saviour. To recuperate her overtaxed energies, she returned, on a vacation of eight months, to the United States. But she had ever before her mind's vision the suffering women of Bulgaria—their great need of a Christian education, and some one to take them by the hand, encourage, and instruct them not only how to come to Christ the Saviour of sinners, but to teach them the various duties of life as well as self-respect; for in that country women are regarded as belonging to an inferior class of beings, and consequently have many disabilities to contend against. It was with much pain, therefore, that she received instructions from the Board that her next field of labour would be one of the South Sea islands. She and a few friends made it a subject of special prayer for Divine guidance. It did seem to her that God required her to return to Bulgaria. She had acquired the language, had the confidence of the people, and was in constant reception of letters from her former pupils and others entreating her to return. She finally concluded to do so; and that she might be the more free to teach, and live out fully her present scriptural ideal of the Christian life, she decided to go out as the Apostles did in ancient times, without purse or scrip, trusting alone in the living God and his precious promises, "that her bread should be given, and her water should be sure," and that her "God should supply all her need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." While these exceeding great and precious promises were given her to strengthen her faith, in their strength, and constrained by the love of Christ, she turned her face towards Bulgaria.

When she arrived at Glasgow she learned that war had been declared between Russia and Turkey, and that the field of operations would probably be Bulgaria; but, nothing daunted, she came on to London. We supposed that she would wait and see if the war-cloud would pass by before resuming her journey, and invited her to remain with us until there should be a more propitious time to enter upon her mission work. Many of our friends also advised her not

to hazard her life, and what is more dear to every true woman's heart than life itself, in a country convulsed by the demon of war. Her reply invariably was, that although the prospect was dark, and the future no one could tell, yet she was impressed that God called her to hasten on, and that if war should rage throughout the length and breadth of the land, she would be all the more needed to minister to the wounded and sick, and bind up bleeding and sorrowing hearts; and though her life should be the forfeiture, yet she would go, trusting her Saviour, whose promise is, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

In May, 1877, she left us and started on her perilous journey. At Naples she heard that Constantinople had been put in a state of siege, which meant she knew not what, or whether she would be permitted to enter the disturbed district. She, however, pressed rapidly forward, and arrived at Philippopolis about the middle of June, having had a prosperous journey. During the terrible atrocities which were being enacted by Turks and Circassians against the Bulgarians, this heroic woman remained at the post of duty, and won all hearts, high and low alike, by her self-sacrificing spirit, both at home and in the hospitals, where she was welcomed as an angel of mercy in very deed.

A prominent and well-informed Bulgarian says:—"Our whole nation honours and loves Mrs. Mumford for her bravery, heroism, and sympathy, in staying by our poor suffering people during their terrible troubles, to bind up their wounds, and give them medicine, food, and comforting words." I have a highly complimentary letter from F. R. J. Calvert, English Vice-Consul, also one from Dr. W. Vlathe, City Physician of Philippopolis, describing Mrs. Mumford's hospital and benevolent work during that terrible war, in the most impressive terms.

An American correspondent with General Gourko's army, wrote thus to the *Philadelphia Times*, U.S. :—

"As I was hurrying through the streets of Philippopolis the day before yesterday, an hour or two before we occupied the town, I saw a little printed American flag stuck in the corner of a building away up on the top of the rocky hill that is piled up with houses, jumbled together at all angles, and in every conceivable form of architecture. Approaching the house, I met at the door a very easily recognizable type of an American woman, and she asked me into a room which was so strangely furnished that I could not believe my own eyes. American printed furniture, American chromos in black walnut frames; 'God bless our Home' worked in worsted; little vases on brackets; even rocking-chairs to sit in.

It was like making a single stride from Roumelia to America, to cross that threshold. I found I was in the home of Mrs. Mumford, who has been in this country nearly six years—first in the service of the American Board of Foreign Missions, and later acting independently in the interests of education. She had arrived from her trip home shortly before General Gourko crossed the mountains in summer, and reached Philippopolis just in time to open a hospital for the wounded who came in from Eski Zara, and to give shelter and protection to numbers of Bulgarians. All through the horrible scenes of the succeeding months, when more than three hundred Bulgarians were hanged in the streets here, she remained at her work. The panic which started here when Suleiman Pasha announced his intention of burning the town on the approach of the Russians, did not affect her at all. She was the only householder in the place who did not pack up the furniture to escape. Certainly her devotion to the work she has undertaken solely in the cause of humanity deserves every praise."

How she is regarded by the people of Bulgaria, especially in the country villages, the following extract from one of her letters just received will show. In company with Miss Doolittle, Gana, her Bible-woman, and two adopted children, she went out for a four weeks' vacation, to a place called Kezanlik. "Now, just see," she says, "how good the Lord was to me, and help me to raise a note of praise to Him. I was afraid my money would not hold out to go to Kezanlik and back if I had to spend much for our living while there. When I got there, the brother who received us into his house insisted on entertaining us as guests, and he paid all the food bills for four weeks. I offered to pay him, but he would not receive it, and said, if I wished to repay him, I could do so by coming again next year to see him. This was not a small gift, to feed a family of five persons for four weeks."

It may not be generally known that Mrs. Mumford's pupils are largely the daughters of persons who lost everything in the war, and consequently are not able to remunerate her. The fathers of some were among the killed, and the children were left orphans and penniless. A few are paying a small remuneration for tuition. There would be a large number of paying scholars but for the Greek Bishop, who prohibits his Church from patronizing the school unless his priests are admitted as catechists, which Mrs. Mumford cannot conscientiously do; therefore she depends upon God, through his people in England and America, for means to carry forward the work, which could be greatly enlarged, provided she had a larger house and more ample means furnished her. In another paper I will give a brief report of her work for the past two years.

II.—REPORT FOR TWO YEARS, FROM JULY, 1877,
TO JULY, 1879.

BY MRS. MUMFORD.

HAVING been called of God, and set apart to the missionary work in Turkey for five years, we returned to it after a rest of eight months, looking only to Him for the means to prosecute it. On our arrival at Philippopolis, the middle of June, 1877, we found the mixed population of Bulgarians, Greeks, Turks, and Jews, in a state of great disquietude. The Turks feared an uprising of the Bulgarians as soon as the Russians—who were reported as rapidly advancing—should come near enough to give them courage. Hundreds of Bulgarians, suspected of revolutionary sentiments, were being thrown into prison. Some extracts from our journal will explain the state of affairs better than we can describe them :—

July 18, 1877.—Russians are reported to have cut the railroad at Yeni Zara. Great alarm in this city; stores and shops closed, the Turkish inhabitants trying to run away, and threatening to burn the city when they leave. At family worship this morning the Lord gave us Jer. i. 11 to the close. We have nothing to fear with God for us.

25th.—City Council gave out word that the city would be burned so as not to fall into the Russians' hands; so many people are removing their household stuffs for safety.

27th.—As we were out at Bible work, we heard that Eski Zara, of 25,000 inhabitants, was destroyed; nine Bulgarians were hung in our streets to-day, and report says many Christian villages are being burned and the villagers massacred all over the country.

31st.—Trains continue to run once a day, and bring the post once a week, but both will stop soon. We have but ten shillings in the world, and know not where to look for help except to God. The Eski Zara massacre is confirmed by the thousands of wounded women and children who have been pouring into our city every day, till it is thought at

least eight thousand have arrived. No provision by the Government to receive and care for them, but the several Consuls have taken up the matter with what money they have for benevolent purposes—all inadequate for the need.

Aug. 1.—Received a kind letter from Constantinople, advising us to come to that city before the railroad should be destroyed, and Philippopolis share the fate of Eski Zara. We answered that, though grateful for the kind care shown for us, it seemed that we ought not to leave our post, when we could render much aid and comfort by our presence to the poor terrified sufferers from the slaughter-pen of Eski Zara. Poor creatures! We cry to God for their relief and work with all our might from day to day.

At the request of the city physician, we take the sole care of one place where the worst wounded are gathered, and visit beside five or six other places daily, to give medicines and advice. What we learned in America during a period of nursing a wounded husband in hospital serves us now, when so few know what to do for gunshot wounds and sabre-cuts. We often see that our previous experience has been but a preparatory department in the school of life, where every lesson learned has now its use and place. Now, as we overlook the dressers of wounds, we know if the work is properly done. Yet how little we understood the Lord's plans for us when serving in that Virginia hospital in 1862!

Aug. 28.—Bulgarians are hung every day or two. Thirty were hung to-day. Some supplies for the refugees have come from Constantinople. The Lord has sent us money for our personal needs.

Sept. 9.—Work in the refugee hospitals is very exhausting both to body and spirit, as we review in our dreams what our eyes have seen in our waking hours. One woman, whose head the Turks tried to cut off, and whose right hand they did cut off, has four other wounds, and last night gave birth to a dead infant. As the nights are getting cooler the Lord in mercy has sent us some coverings for the wounded, who have till now lain upon the bare ground, with the same clothes upon them in which they were wounded—stench and vermin being intolerable. Found in one refugee hospital two sisters, six and nine years old, whom we will try to take to our own house.

Jan. 1, 1878.—Christmas and the new year bring no rejoicings to this Aceldama. We have not written in our journal for a long time, because when darkness each day shut off further demands upon our time and attention, we were too

tired to write, and our spirits were weighed down by the sight of things about us, which have been growing worse and worse, darker and darker, till all classes of citizens, plunged in the deepest gloom, show in their suffering, sad countenances the despair of spirits passed beyond the bounds of hope. An English newspaper correspondent remarked the other day, that "if one wished to know what hell was like, he could come to Turkey and be gratified." Plevna has fallen, and the Russians are expected soon. Yet Bulgarians continue to be hung, and the spirits of all classes are pressed down under the most dreadful forebodings of coming disasters. Escape is impossible; no passes are given. To wish to leave is to be suspected and arrested. If a man succeeds in slipping away, his family suffer: sons are hung because the father has run away, and was therefore a rebel. No notice is given of hangings. Sometimes we are turned into the street by dead Bulgarians hanging from door-posts in such a way as to obstruct the passage of the narrow side walk. We go everywhere, all through the city and in the outskirts, with perfect safety, the Lord giving us favour in the eyes of the people.

Jan. 8.—Weather extremely cold. A telegram has just come from Sulieman Pasha (who is retreating from Sophia followed by the Russian army in hot pursuit), to vacate this city; for he should make a stand here, and would not be responsible for the consequences. The Consuls and chief leaders of the different nationalities decided not to evacuate, as there was no safe place for their families to go to. This rather troubled the City Council, but they could not drive out the European Consuls. Some people came to see what we were preparing to do, and when they found our household moving on in its regular way, with washing, ironing, and cooking, they asked how it was that we could calmly cut and sew dresses and aprons for our two little girls (who are still with us), when the city was in the greatest possible danger, and some of the strongest of its principal men were actually sick from fear. This gave us an opportunity to magnify the grace of God, which is able to keep in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on Him. As far as we can learn, our family is the only one that had its regular sleep during eight fearful days and nights, in which all persons kept dressed and ready to go out into the plains at a moment's notice.

Jan. 11.—The Turkish citizens are now in great terror, and flying in every direction. Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, armed and mounted on good horses, ride briskly hither and thither in an expectant way, as if waiting for a favourable

signal to begin their work of massacre and plunder; some cases are already reported on the outskirts of the city.

Jan. 14.—Early this morning Turkish regulars fired the business portion of the city, and began to plunder, when the Consular Committee obliged the Mayor to use force to stop it. At noon, Consul Calvert (who had been authorized to act also for American citizens) sent us word that he had something important to communicate. We went immediately to his house, which was near us, and he said that Suleiman Pasha's army was even now entering the city, with the Russians hard after them, and a battle was sure to begin this evening or early in the morning, when the city would probably be burned. An engine, only, would come from Sernen to get the R. R. officers, and he would get a place on it for us if we could be ready to go in three hours. We told him there would probably not be room on the engine for our Bible-woman and two children; neither had we the intention of leaving. He replied that we would remain on our own responsibility, and we accepted the condition. Returning home, we sent a boy all about the outskirts of the city where the few Protestant Bulgarians lived, to tell them to take a little coal, some bread, and blankets, and come immediately to our house, as they were in great danger. By dark we had over forty persons collected, and our prayer-meeting that night was like that of the disciples with closed doors for fear of the Jews. Jesus also was in our midst, and we were greatly comforted by his presence. The city government, in leaving, gave out some guns to the Christian citizens to defend the city against the Circassians and Bashi-Bazouks and they patrolled the streets in squads. Russians appeared on the plains beyond the river, and early the next morning Suleiman Pasha began to shell them from one of the hills on which the city is built. Going our usual rounds, we wondered at seeing no one in the streets except the patrol, but soon understood the reason. Before returning home, five rifle-balls whistled past us. The women in our hospital were much frightened, expecting another massacre as at Eski Zara. We pointed them to our Refuge in the day of trouble.

Jan. 15.—No more Turks to be seen anywhere—neither soldiers nor citizens. Russians marched into the city with music and national songs, as they shook hands with the Bulgarians standing alongside the streets to greet them.

Sharp firing in the region of the retreating Turks showed an engagement in progress.

Jan. 18.—Suleiman Pasha's army was completely routed,

leaving their cannon in the Russians' hands. Many of the wounded Turks at the shed ran off with their army; the rest are dead in their blankets, not having had any attention for three or four days.

Feb. 11.—When the Consular Committee ceased to help the refugees, we kept our hospital open for another month, till the poor women and children could hear from, and make connexions with, the husbands and male relatives who were still living, but divided from them. The Turks ran away from the villages upon the approach of the Russians; so now the Bulgarian peasants are invited, by the pleasant spring sunshine, to take up again the burden of a life which has always been so hard, with fresh hope and courage.

The week after our hospital was emptied we were invited by the Consular Committee to overlook a large number of little children picked up in this city and brought from other places left by the Turks in their flight. We accepted it as from the Lord, going every day to attend them, becoming much attached to the little things; they were finally removed to Constantinople, and we asked the Lord for other work. Immediately we received applications for some Bulgarian girls to enter our family to learn to read. We asked the Lord to show us his will by sending us the money to feed them, and the very next post brought me the news that money was on the way.

In this way we began a boarding-school to educate missionary workers, who promise, when they enter, to use their powers, when they shall finish the course, to make known the riches of Christ in regions beyond and to those who sit in darkness. This school has increased in numbers and efficiency till the present month, which completes its first year with fifty-one names upon the roll, all but fourteen being day-scholars.

When the work of teaching became too hard for us alone, the Lord in great mercy sent us a yokefellow in Miss C. R. Doolittle, who arrived in November, 1878, and immediately began to learn the language, and teach English in the school. By God's blessing she has continued till the close of the year with uninterrupted health and strength. God's presence and blessing have been with us, especially shown in the increased prayerfulness and growth in grace of all the girls in our family. Their little trials send them to a throne of grace, and the voice of prayer ascending from one closeted with God alone, or from two or three united as touching something which they are earnestly seeking, may be often

heard from their dormitory, or from the clump of cherry-trees in the corner of our little garden. Their hearts are tender and susceptible to the love of Christ. We have kept no servants; our good girls, like daughters, have divided the domestic labour between themselves, and not only cared for their own work, but also for us, in a most economical and praiseworthy manner.

Our Bible-woman, Gana, after the work for refugees ceased, has gone from village to village with her little carpet-bag strapped upon her side, with a few simple remedies which she has learned to use, holding up Christ to those who have never before heard the gracious words. In this manner she has occupied at least nine months of her time out of the fourteen; and "the common people hear her gladly." Not a small part of our work has been in the dispensary, helping, to the best of our ability, the sick and afflicted according to our Lord's command to "heal the sick."

Besides gifts of food and clothing from England and America for our family needs, we acknowledge for the refugees one large bale of new ready-made clothing from Mrs. Layard, of Constantinople, two large bales of partly worn clothing from the students of Robert College, and other friends; some beef extract, tea, coffee, crackers, and milk. Also £10 from Bebek Church, Constantinople; £7 Robert College; £2 from Beshishtash, Constantinople; and £2 from two individuals. Three boxes of provisions for our own use, from England; two boxes and one bale of clothes, also for our family use, from England; one box of clothes and one cooking stove from America. In all we have received £629½ in money, or \$3149 50c. U.S. currency. Of this £125½ has been used for refugees; £10 for medicines; £75 for house rent; £25 for house furnishing; £235 for school and family expenses; £7 for schoolroom furniture; £6 for teachers' wages; £16 for wages, Bible-woman, and tours; £120 for travelling expenses of two persons from America; £10 balance on hand; total, £629½.

Thus we have gone on by faith and prayer, asking aid from no one but from God; and we can say, to the praise of his grace, we have lacked nothing. Our means have kept pace with our constantly increasing necessities, sometimes in a very remarkable manner, and from sources the most unlooked for, while from quarters where aid might reasonably have been expected none has come—teaching us not to trust in horses or chariots, but in the living God.

In a letter dated Aug. 27, 1879, Mrs. Mumford makes the following important statements:—"My present work lies before me in a state very compact and clearly marked out"—a field for Bible work begun in a circuit of four or five villages contiguous, with a competent middle-aged woman at the head of it; a school of twenty-four boarders under training as Bible workers or teachers, each pledged to work two years when her course is finished, and an influence beginning already to be felt in the city through day-scholars who come to us; a dispensary, which gives out medicines and advice to many poor people, not only from our own city but from villages around, who come in. The low condition of women in this country makes my heart bleed. Something must be done to make women more respected by the men. This will be through the education alike of head, hands, and heart. Each educated girl who goes out of our school to begin a home of her own, begins to give out light to all around, and is looked up to with great reverence and respect as being superior to the other women, even though they may be much poorer in this world's goods. It is thus very important that their education should be such as will show forth Christ, otherwise they only become more powerful for evil.

"You see our work has just doubled in one year. If the Lord enlarges our borders every year in this way it will be most marvellous."

MR. O. M. BROWN, of Oberlin, Ohio, U.S.A., gratuitously acts as Mrs. Mumford's agent for friends in America. Any remittances made to him will be duly acknowledged and forwarded. Any donations forwarded to "*The Christian*" will also be faithfully cared for.

